

REVIEW OF THE STATE OF THE BRITISH NATION.

Tuesday, September 16. 1707.

IF I was to blame in any thing in my last, it was to make it worth while, for any Man that reads this Paper, so much to examine the Forgeries of a News-writer, such as Mr. Dyer—A Man, that if he has any Ingenuity in his Writing, it is, that when he has cheated the World with a Sham, he is content to bear being told of, because he knows it is just.

And shall I be born with, Gentlemen, if I entertain you once more with what this wonderful Person tells the World in his written Letter of the 10th of August, among his other Remarks of the Affair of Thoulon, to this Purpose?

That Prince Eugene and the Duke of Savoy never approv'd the Enterprize, but undertook it in Compliance with a certain Sovereign, they were very much oblig'd to.

Now, Gentlemen, would you know the Design of a certain Party of Men in the World, and which they are now diligently carrying on in the World, it is to lay the Blame of a miscarrying Project on the English Court—Whether this be to serve an End abroad or at home, or both, let others determine, and Time explain; say, the QUEEN Herself is brought in as a Person in Compliance to whose Determination this Enterprize was undertaken.

I would capitulate now with these Gentlemen for one thing, if they would answer it faithfully upon Honour—Come, Gentlemen, speak honestly now for once; would you have own'd it was contriv'd in the English Court, if it had succeeded? would you have given the QUEEN or the Ministry the Glory of it, if Thoulon had been taken?—

I have too much Reason to believe the Negative.

No, no, had *Thoulon* been taken, it had been all Prince *Eugene* of *Savoy*; he had always been too hard for the *French*, he had been used to out-wit them, and be too cunning for them, and it had been all his—Nor was this Enquiry ever started till now—We never ask'd, who contriv'd it, till it miscarry'd.

This is excellent Justice indeed! And a vast Encouragement for Men to serve you; just thus the same Men, who in their Observations magnify'd the Victory at *Blenheim*.—Before their blinded and envious Eyes saw the Reason, Necessity and Success of that Enterprize—The same Author reproach'd that great General, with marching the *English* Army away into remote Parts.

These are the People that guide their Judgments of things by hasty Views and Reproach, or Praise, not according to the true Merit, but Success of Mens Actions.

But to let that Part of it pass—I am for taking what they say for granted, and for the sake of the Argument, taking it as they lay it; that this Design was contriv'd here, tho' I confess, this is the first Time I heard of it—I know no reason there is to be shy of owning it, either to our selves or to our Confederates—And whoever contriv'd it, this must be said.

1. Had it been brought to pass, it had been the most fatal Blow to the present Greatness of *France*, and perhaps to her future Greatness too, that ever was struck in this War; and therefore to say it was contriv'd here or there, is a Panegyrick on the Persons.

2. Could they say, *England* had any hand in the Miscarriage, either for Want of due Assistance, Encouragement, Supply or timely Support, it would be something to the Purpose, and we might be blam'd for baulking the Design; but to reproach *England* with the contriving, is, just as if you should blame them for contriving the Battle of *Blenheim*, or the Relief of *Turin*, both which receiv'd their Source, Life, and Supply from the *English* Court.

3. They will not say it was an unlikely Project—And is any human Power answerable for Success?—As to the Probabilities, I refer to the Letters from the Duke of *Savoy* and Prince *Eugene*, which have been publicly mentioned in our Prints, viz. That it was the most promising Enterprize, they ever went about, and one of them calls it impossible to miscarry. It would be very hard, Gentlemen, to call it then an unlikely Project—

4. This is a most unsufferable Satyr upon Prince *Eugene* of *Savoy*, a Person whose Judgment none of the knowing World will pretend to call in question, and upon the Duke of *Savoy*, whose Bravery and Experience even the King of *France* acknowledg'd in his long Letter to the Pope, on the Affair of that Prince falling from him—Now 'tis a most egregious Banter upon them both to say, that they undertook an improbable Enterprize, which did not convince their judgments, only to please or to comply with the QUEEN of *England*.

5. If it be true—Let the Success be what it will, it is very much to the Honour of *England*, that a Contrivance so great, so deep, that gave all *France* such a Shock, put them into a Fitt of trembling, and gave them a near View of the Mortality of their Empire, should be formed here—And that, when all is said, such Work is cut out for the *French* in our Councils, let the *French* have a Care how they give us leave to contrive such another.

Lastly, Gentlemen, must we look to *England* for the Contrivance of it; pray, where shall we look for the Disappointment? This may put you upon Enquiry, and many Guesses may be made—But pray, Gentlemen, do not let your Conjectures so much as look towards *Naples*; I do not say, that if that Expedition had not been push'd on, the *Germans* had been so many thousand Men the stronger, and the like, which any body will say, might be guess'd without

without Witchcraft: But this I'll say, that I am perswaded, they had also been before *Tboulon* 3 Weeks sooner at least, and long before the *Mareschal Tbesse* had reached it; I always said, the Duke of *Savoy* and the *Mareschal De Tbesse* were running a Race for *Tboulon*, and they that came first there would have it— And so it has prov'd indeed, and many good Reasons were to be given for it, too long to repeat here.

Intollerable is the *Englifo* Custom of censuring the Miscarriages of every Action, as the Errors of the Contrivers! I am really absolutely a Stranger to the Design of this Suggestion, and cannot at this distance so much as guess who it is they point at in it.—But let it be who or where it will, it will always be to the Honour of his Judgment, and it cannot be justly thought otherwise.

For my Part, I never prais'd the Actions of any Man in my Life, as the Actions of the Man, but as Actions which ought to be esteem'd, and the Person for them; I think, he that will applaud the Actions of the greatest Man on Earth, to flatter, gain by, please or wheedle the Person, is one of the worst Sort of Hypocrites; and I thank GOD, I can safely say, I never wrote a Word to please, or restrain'd writing a Word for Fear of the greatest or most powerful Man or Body of Men in the World.—This Paper shall be a plain Dealer, or cease to be a Paper.

But we have such a Humour in this Nation of insulting our Superiours, that 'tis a Sin against Custom to do them Justice, even when they do right.—I by no means think, the best Counsel or Ministry Her Majesty ever had, has, or will have, infallible.—And I doubt not but Numbers wait for their Halting.—But 'tis enough to us if they are honest.—And that has so rarely happen'd in these latter Ages of Time, that Suspicion is very rational.

But unhappy is the Time surely that I write in, that nothing, the Government can do, must be own'd, much less defended as well done.—'Tis not many Years, Gentlemen, that we have had a Government, or a

Ministry, fit to own or fit to commend; for my part, 'tis the Action, not the Men, I am defending, nor do I know the Men or who they are.—But certainly, whoever contriv'd the Siege of *Tboulon*, ought to desire no better Epitaph on his Tomb, to endear his Memory to his native Country, let it be who it will.—Since, let the Circumstances that made it difficult, or that cross'd the Execution, be what they will, it was certainly a laying the Axe to the Root of *French Power*, and at once giving the Empire of *France* a mortal Stab, which had it been effected, they could never have out-lived.

This Attempt I take to correspond exactly with that of telling the World, how we were dejected at the News; I have spoken something to that already, and indeed there is Room to say a great deal more.—But I'll tell one Reason or two, why we should be far from being dejected at this Disappointment.

1. Because indeed we ought to be dejected at nothing; the Ups and Downs of the War are so far from being Novelities, that they ought to be expected; and if we look back, we shall find, as I said before, a *Vigo* succeeded a *Cadiz*, we had a *Namure* after a *Landen*, a *Blenheim* after a *Spirebach*, a *Ramellies* after a *Treves*, and why not an Equivalent for *Tboulon*, why not some happy Blow yet, to revive these Men of Dejections? Let us be no more dejected, wise Men never wonder, and Fools only despair.
2. Examine the present Condition of *France*, with all the Helps this Summer has given him, and we shall see very little Reason to be dejected; I shall take the Pains, I believe, to remind you of the Condition of this *French Power*, a little before the Battle of *Blenheim*—I do confess, wise Men saw some Reason then to be dejected, and when we had Advice that *Monsieur Tallard* was joyned the Duke of *Bavaria*—Had not the Duke of *Marlborough* made that prodigious March, nay even after that, had not the *French* and